

VE OFFICE



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

GOVERNMENTAL CENTER

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February 22, 1985

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
County of Santa Cruz
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Santa Cruz, CA 95060

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COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER'S REPORT
ON THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Dear Board Members:

Attached for your Board's consideration is our first report concerning the Planning Department. The report is the product of an intensive effort by this office and the Planning Department to identify and correct the most serious departmental deficiencies and problems and to recommend changes in the present land use regulatory system.

This report addresses the complex land use regulatory system in Santa Cruz, a system which is the product of State Law, Proposition 20, Measure J, the California Environmental Quality Act, and local ordinances and procedures. Specific recommendations are made which affect organizational structure, office procedures and operations, physical layout, worker productivity, and management accountability.

In summary, the report recommends the following changes which will involve significant one-time costs for physical changes and equipment, but should not increase ongoing operating costs:

-- Departmental Reorganization

A staff and administrative reorganization is recommended to create an organizational structure which provides for two major divisions: permit processing and advanced planning. Such a structure will provide a more focused, logical and specialized management structure to improve management processes, facilitate staff training and development, and enhance the department's ability to serve the public.

REPORT ON THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT

It is our recommendation that members of the staff with extensive day-to-day experience and specialized expertise assume a central role in ensuring a smooth organizational transition. The recommended reorganization will require two new positions on an interim basis - to provide for a prompt transition - but will not require any increase in total authorized positions when the transition is complete.

-- Physical Reorganization

Our office has completed a comprehensive analysis of the physical space needs of the fourth floor departments. The scope of this review included an examination of the public counter area, interior office needs, conference and meeting room requirements, records retention and retrieval, functional work relationships, and special purpose work areas.

We are recommending an increase in space and substantial modifications for the Planning Department and the Health Services Agency's Environmental Health Division, with a minor decrease in the total space allocation to the Public Works Department.

For the Planning Department, we recommend an expanded counter and public lobby area; a more secure and accessible records room; centralized management staff; convenient conference and meeting rooms; smaller administrative offices; an overall increase in the number of private work areas; pool areas for clerical and fiscal staff; and specialized areas for plan layout, computer entry and printing. The interior space design also reflects the functional aspects and programmatic relationships of the recommended reorganization.

Relocation of the Health Services Agency's Environmental Health Division is recommended to accomplish these objectives and to provide additional space for the existing staff, files and equipment in Environmental Health. Space on the third floor of the County building will become available in mid-April when the Human Resources Agency relocates to the Emeline Street Complex.

-- Staff Training and Tools

The complex land use regulatory system in Santa Cruz County requires staff to develop an expertise in a wide range of State and local laws, regulations and policies. We recommend that the Planning Department increase training efforts and designate training coordinators, establish a training committee, develop a comprehensive orientation system and an ongoing in-service training program, and survey staff and other departments to identify specific training needs.

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The second part of the document is a letter from the Secretary of the War Department to the Secretary of the Navy. It is dated January 1, 1863. The letter is addressed to the Secretary of the Navy. It is signed by the Secretary of the War Department.

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REPORT ON THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT

In addition to increasing training, we recommend the development of policy and procedure manuals for staff reference. We also recommend that the Planning Department management staff initiate a thorough analysis of position responsibilities, expectation and authority to clarify decision-making processes.

In conjunction with final space planning, we are recommending that the Planning Department staff be surveyed to assess whether there are critical equipment or resource needs which would improve overall efficiencies.

-- Procedural Changes

In addition to the reorganization of the Planning Department, physical modifications to the interior offices and public areas, and initiation of an intensive in-service training program, we are also recommending several procedural changes to improve departmental operations and the processing of project applications.

In regards to application processing, we are recommending that the pre-application review procedure be expanded to provide an initial, comprehensive multi-function review of complex proposals which are not presently subject to the Development Review Group process. We are also recommending that site visits be scheduled and conducted in a coordinated manner to minimize delays and identify project problems and requirements at the earliest possible time.

Planning staff should also develop additional methods to explain application submission requirements and processing procedures and schedules to the public. Video tape presentations, large display charts, and orientation sessions are included as specific recommendations.

The recommendations in this report provide a broader and different direction from the concept of an integrated counter as the cornerstone of the solution to applicant problems with the current land use regulatory process. While we believe that a new counter is necessary and important, we also believe that other changes are of equal importance and when considered together, represent a multifaceted approach to a most complex problem.

A staff and management reorganization which consolidates resources, provides specialization, and improves overall accountability should enhance the Planning Department's ability to process permit applications by providing a more efficient organizational structure. Similarly, intensified staff in-service training should lead to the development of staff expertise which will translate into more consistent and complete service to the public. The other management, application processing, and procedural recommendations presented in this report should also result in improvements in application processing and overall level of service.

Section 10.00 - General Provisions

10.01 - The Contractor shall be responsible for obtaining all necessary permits and licenses for the work to be performed under this contract. The Contractor shall also be responsible for obtaining all necessary insurance coverage for the work.

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REPORT ON THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Physical improvements in the Planning Department should increase staff morale, provide a more efficient space layout, increase productivity, and create a more positive public image.

In conjunction with the physical expansion of the counter, we are also recommending a new intake system which provides for individual or group appointments in addition to walk-in counter service. In our judgment, those projects which are complex in scope and involve multiple clearances and approvals by County departments and outside agencies, do not lend themselves to unscheduled counter assistance. On the other hand, simpler permit applications and development questions are appropriate for handling at the counter on an ongoing basis.

Ongoing Assessment

In our January 15th status report to your Board on Planning Department operations, we indicated that the initial meetings between staff and members of the Board of Supervisors were the first steps in a long range process of reviewing Planning Department operations from both an internal and external perspective. This report focuses on those concerns identified by your Board and provides specific recommendations to improve departmental operations.

Implementing the recommendations in this report will require an intensive effort on the part of the Planning Department and our office and will take a significant amount of time. Careful planning and an ongoing commitment of staff resources must occur to ensure a successful transition and implementation.

During the implementation phase, we will develop a strategy for appropriate client participation, future assessment projects, and provide your Board with a status report at that time.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, we believe, and the Planning Director concurs, that the recommendations in the attached report represent a significant first step in correcting the problems experienced by applicants. The recommendations should also provide a system of improved management accountability and improved working conditions which should increase worker productivity.

Fundamental to the implementation of the recommendations in the attached report are the department and physical reorganizations. Since these changes will redefine many jobs, reporting relationships, procedures and systems, and office work areas, it will be difficult to do meaningful work on the priority areas of staff training and development, redesign of the applicant intake system, and implementation of information and control systems until the physical and organization changes are accomplished and the transition teams established.

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While some of the recommendations in the attached can be implemented independent of the reorganization, most were developed in contemplation of the new organization. We believe they can be most successfully implemented with the new organization and work environment.

At this time we are recommending that your Board take the following actions to begin the complex process and difficult management problem of implementing the changes and recommendations detailed in the attached study.

- ✓ 1. Approve the new organizational structure and authorize for recruitment and classification purposes the two new positions of Assistant Planning Director and Supervisor of the Minor Projects Section;
- ✓ 2. Direct the Personnel Department to work with the Planning Department to identify the reclassification studies that will be necessary as a result of the various reassignments associated with implementing the organization structure;
- ✓ 3. Order the establishment of the transition teams necessary to effect an orderly transition from the current organization structure to the recommended structure;
- ✓ 4. Approve the physical reorganization; direct General Services to develop plans and specifications for the changes and to coordinate the schedule and sequence of events with the Planning Department; direct this office to work with the Health Services Agency and Planning Department regarding the orderly transition of Environmental Health from the fourth to the third floor; authorize the County Administrative Officer to include the needed accoustical panels, desks, tables and equipment in the 1984-85 Certificates of Participation Issue; direct this office to develop recommendations on the financing of the physical changes;
- ⑤ 5. Approve the other recommendations in the report involving:
 - Applicant processing, applicant education, and staff coordination
 - Management Information and Control System
 - Staff Development and Training
 - Procedures and criteria for a new applicant intake system which makes greater use of appointments for potentially complex projects and express service for simpler applications;

Overall
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assistance
contract

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time

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The second part of the document is a list of the topics that were discussed at the meeting. The topics are listed in alphabetical order.

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REPORT ON THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT

also
5/14

6. Direct that the Planning Department, with the assistance of the transition team for the new Permit Division, develop a schedule for addressing and reporting on the recommendations in each of the preceding areas;

✓ 7. Defer recommendations on the Fiscal Officer position until March 26, 1985.

Very truly yours,


GEORGE T. NEWELL

County Administrative Officer

GTN/DL:mt

Attachment

cc: Planning Department
Health Services Agency
Department of Public Works
General Services
Personnel Department

8. Prof. design contract for
entire proposal

9. Phone service recomm.
to come back 3/26

COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER'S REPORT ON
PLANNING DEPARTMENT SPACE, ORGANIZATION
AND APPLICATION PROCESSING

FEBRUARY, 1985

GEORGE T. NEWELL
COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

INTRODUCTION

During the months of December, 1984 and January of this year, management staff from the County Administrative Office and the Planning Department met with each member of the Board of Supervisors and their aide to identify and discuss problems which they or their constituents encounter when working with the Planning Department. The goal of these meetings was to initiate a comprehensive assessment of problems experienced with the Planning Department.

Since these initial meetings, staff from both offices have analyzed the concerns and discussed various alternatives for addressing the problems. This report is a summary of this process, and presents our initial findings and recommendations for your Board's consideration.

For presentation purposes, the expressed concerns and our corresponding recommendations have been classified into the following general subject areas:

1. Application Processing
2. Management and Information Systems
3. Staff Development and Training
4. Physical Environment and Public Areas

It should be noted that the focus of this report is on departmental problems, not strengths. Without exception, there were many positive and complimentary remarks about the Planning Department, its staff, and the many programs and services it provides.

I. APPLICATION PROCESSING

PROBLEM:

Applicants often receive inconsistent, incomplete and conflicting information about application requirements and site and development restrictions. The sequential and independent processing of applications within the different divisions of the Planning Department and by the other County land use and outside agencies contributes to application delays, fragmentation of review, conflict in processing priorities, and multiple decision-making processes.

Background - Regulatory Environment

As a result of State law and the actions of the State and local electorate, Santa Cruz County has an extraordinarily complex land use regulatory system. In addition to those State laws which are in effect in all jurisdictions in California, Santa Cruz is also subject to the provisions of Proposition 20, the Coastal Act. The local enactment of Measure J by the voters of this County also imposed a number of unique requirements for future residential development in this County. In response to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and local concerns, the County has adopted a number of local ordinances which protect the environment and regulate development.

By their very nature, the volume and complexity of the laws and policies governing development in this County require substantial staff involvement throughout the application review period. Review and analysis is presently accomplished through sequential processing, first within the various divisions

of the Planning Department itself, followed by review by other County departments -- Environmental Health Division, Public Works Department, and the Fire Marshal's office -- and a myriad of other local, regional and State agencies, districts, and commissions. A list of these agencies which have regulatory responsibilities and/or review and comment authority is presented below:

COUNTY DEPARTMENTS

Board of Supervisors
County Administrative Office
Planning Department - Current Planning
Planning Department - Environmental Planning
Planning Department - Comprehensive Planning
Planning Department - Inspection Services Division
Planning Department - Administrative Services Division
Health Department - Environmental Health Division
Public Works - Engineering Division
Public Works - Operations Division
General Services - Fire Marshal
Parks, Open Space and Cultural Services
Agricultural Commissioner
Agricultural Extension
Assessor
County Counsel
Treasurer-Tax Collector

COUNTYWIDE COMMISSIONS & DISTRICTS

Santa Cruz County Planning Commission
Santa Cruz County Transportation Commission
Santa Cruz County Historical Resources Commission
Santa Cruz County Housing Authority
Santa Cruz County Transit District
Santa Cruz County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Commission
Arts Commission
Energy Commission
Nuisance Abatement Appeals Commission
Seniors Commission
Water Advisory Commission
Housing Advisory Commission
Agricultural Policies Advisory Commission
Mobile Home Advisory Commission
Building Appeals Board
Assessment Appeals Board

REGIONAL AGENCIES & DISTRICTS

Air Pollution Control District
Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG)
Regional Water Quality Control Board

LESS THAN COUNTYWIDE DISTRICTS

Fire Districts

Aptos Fire District
Aromas Tri-County Fire District
Ben Lomond Fire District
Boulder Creek Fire District
Branciforte Fire District
Capitola Fire District
Central County Fire District
Felton Fire District
Freedom Fire District
Freedom Fire Protection
La Selva Beach Fire District
Salsipuedes Fire District
Scotts Valley Fire District
State Department of Forestry

School Districts

Cabrillo College
Chancellor's Office, UCSC
Bonny Doon School District
Happy Valley School District
Live Oak School District
Loma Prieta Joint Union School District
Pajaro Valley Unified Schools
San Lorenzo Valley Unified School District
Santa Cruz City Schools
Soquel High School
Soquel Union School District
Various Elementary School District

Port District

STATE AGENCIES

California Coastal Commission
California Department of Fish & Game
California Department of Parks & Recreation
California Department of Transportation
California Department of Real Estate
California Department of Social Services
California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control
California Department of Highway Patrol
State Franchise Tax Board
State Clearinghouse

Background - Planning Department Organizational Structure

The responsibility for permit processing within the Planning Department is decentralized among the various divisions. The Current Planning Division is responsible for project review in terms of compliance with general plan, local coastal plan, zoning laws and other local ordinances. Current Planning staff handle both major project applications as well as minor, relatively simple projects.

The Inspection Services Division is responsible for providing information to applicants on building laws at the counter, explaining the provisions of Measure J, performing plan check reviews for compliance with energy and all other building requirements, and for performing field inspections during actual construction.

The Environmental Division is responsible for ensuring compliance with the provisions of CEQA, as well as conducting technical reviews in the areas of erosion, grading, geologic hazards, riparian corridors, and processing for specialized surface mining applications.

The Comprehensive Planning Division is responsible for processing General Plan and Local Coastal Plan amendments, providing technical reviews and information on transportation and housing, as well as providing technical assistance with respect to General Plan and Local Coastal Program text and map interpretations.

The Graphics staff within the Administrative Services Division provide technical drawings and maps in support of application processing. The Director and Assistant Director are responsible for appeals of administrative permit decisions and respond to permit-related questions from the public, members of the Board of Supervisors, and other individuals.

Therefore, staff in all five different divisions have certain responsibilities for the processing of project applications. The table on pages 4A and 4B illustrates how the various permits, approvals, reviews and clearances administered by the Planning Department are distributed among the different divisions and the fact that there is no single authority reporting to the Director responsible for coordination and administration of the application processing function. As a result, interpretations of various laws and ordinances may originate in any of the different divisions.

In addition to lacking a single administrative authority for application processing, the Planning Department at present does not have a single position responsible for department-wide coordination of the long-range planning functions, which are currently administered by the Comprehensive Planning and Environmental Planning Divisions. Staff in these divisions are responsible for the administration of specialized programs and specific studies and projects, as well as application processing and review. The commingling of both ongoing application processing and long-range planning functions poses workload, procedural, and prioritization problems for these divisions.

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			Annual #	PLANNING DEPARTMENT DIVISIONS INVOLVED			
			of				
Proc.	Type of Permit	Description	Permits/Approvals	Coas. Planning	Environ. Planning	Current Planning	Slido Inspection
7	Subdivisions(Land Divisons)	Subdivision 20 or more parcels	10		x		
7	Zoning	Rezoning-zoning designation amdt.	10				
7	General Plan	Amendments	10	x	x	x	
7	Coastal Approvals	LCP Amendment	3	x	x	x	
7	Residential Uses	New - 20 or more	8		x	x	
7	Agriculture	ag preseve and openspace easement	6	x			
7	Ordinances	Any Amendment	2	x			
7	Permits	Revocations	1			x	
7	Subdivisions(Land Divisons)	TP Land Division	1		x	x	
7	Subdivisions(Land Divisons)	Ag Resource Land Division	1	x	x	x	
7	Agriculture	Ag land type designation amendment	1	x			
7	Historical	Designation of Landmarks	0	x			
7	Zoning	Interpretations	0	x			
7	Mobilehome Parks	20 or more units	0		x	x	
7	Reversion to Acreage	Approval	0			x	
7	Historical	Designation of Districts	0	x			
7	Condominium Conversion	20 or more units	0		x	x	
7	Historical	Demolition	0	x			
7	Specific Plans	Plan Adoption	0	x	x2	x2	
7	Precise Plan of Streets	Adoption	0	x			
6	Grading	+800 cubic yds/scenic corridor/EIR	23		x		
6	Residential Uses	New - 5-19 units	10		x	x	
6	Subdivisions(Land Divisons)	Subdivision 5 - 19 parcels	10		x	x	
6	Compliance	Conditional	7			x	
6	Comm. and Industrial Uses	Shop Cntr master plan 20000 sq ft	3		x	x	
6	Comm. and Industrial Uses	greater than 20000 sq ft	1		x	x	
6	Timber Harvest	More than .5 mbf in non TP	0				
6	Mining	Approvals	0	x			
6	Mobilehome Parks	5-19 units	0		x	x	
6	Timber Harvest	More than 1.5 mbf in TP	0		x		
6	Condominium Conversion	5-19 units	0		x	x	
6	Mobilehome Parks	Conversions	0		x	x	
6	Historical	Change in Use	0	x			
5	Zoning	Variances	93			x	
5	Coastal Approvals	Costal Zone Approval	97		x	x	
5	Subdivisions(Land Divisons)	Minor Land Division	39		x	x	
5	Comm. and Industrial Uses	new 2000 - 20000 sq ft	15		x	x	
5	Permits	Renewals - land division	15		x	x	
5	Residential Uses	New - 2-4 units	15		x	x	
5	Condominium Conversion	2-4 units	2		x	x	
5	Historical	Change in Structure	0	x			
5	Swiming Pool Enclosure	Exception	0		x		
5	Air Port Approach Permit	height of structure	0			x	
5	Zoning	Directional Signs	0			x	
5	Energy Conservation	Wind powered generators - major	0			x	
5	Mobilehome Parks	2-4 units	0		x	x	
4	Permits	Amendments	55		x2		
4	Subdivisions(Land Divisons)	Parcel redivision	17			x	
4	Permits	Renewals - DP	13				
4	Certificate of Compliance	Regular	8			x	

			Annual #	PLANNING DEPARTMENT DIVISIONS INVOLVED				
			of					
Proc.	Type of Permit	Description	Permits/Approvals	Corp. Planning	Environ. Planning	Current Planning	Bldg Inspection	
4	Residential Uses	Affordable second units	7		x	x		
4	Comm. and Industrial Uses	new less than 2000 sq ft	7		x	x		
4	Grading	Variances - major	0		x			
3	Erosion Control/ld clearing	Approvals and Permits	1,040		x			
3	Residential Uses	New - Single family dwelling	522		x	x	x	
3	Zoning	Conforming chgs/non conforming st.	112			x		
3	Geologic Hazards	Assessment	34		x			
3	Grading	100-800 cubic yards	65		x			
3	Permits	Minor Variations	60			x		
3	Zoning	Habitable Accessory Structures	32		x	x		
3	Zoning	Right of way	29			x		
3	Uses	Temporary uses	21					
3	Subdivisions (land division)	Boundary adjustments	21			x		
3	Grading	Retaining Walls	19		x			
3	Biotic	Site review	10		x			
3	Zoning	Excess Resid. Bldg Hght - minor	8			x		
3	Agriculture	Ag buffer review	6	x				
3	Archeological	Site Development	4		x			
3	Grading	Variances - minor	3		x			
3	Zoning	Fences, front greater than 3 ft	2			x		
3	Archeological	Excavations	1		x			
3	Palenotological	Approvals	0		x			
3	Timber Harvest	Less than .5 abf in non TP	0		x			
3	Timber Harvest	Less than .5 abf in TP	0		x			
3	Water Quality Control	Approvals	0		x			
2	Minor bldg permit	Minor Structures	426		x1	x	x	
2	Minor bldg permit	Room Additions	308		1	x		
2	Minor bldg permit	Revisions, misc.	195				x	
2	Minor bldg permit	Remodels	186		x1	x	x	
2	Minor bldg permit	Solar hot water	185				x	
2	Environmental	Assessment	145			x		
2	Minor bldg permit	Commercial	110				x	
2	Minor bldg permit	Special Inspections	110		x	x	x	
2	Coastal Approvals	Notice of Exclusion	71			x		
2	Significant Trees	Approval	19			x		
2	Energy Conservation	Wind powered generators - minor	0		x	x		
1	minor bldg permit	electrical, plumbing, mechanical	1013				x	
1	Environmental	Exemption	416			x		
1	Comm. and Industrial Uses	Changes of use extg structure w/imp	7					
NO. OF DIFFERENT PERMITS/APPROVALS			89	16	51	55	12	
TOTAL NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS			5335					

x1 -- Review required based on size and location of building

x2 -- Review required based on location of property

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Recommendations:

1. Create an organizational structure which consolidates the resources involved in application processing as separate and distinct from those committed to long-range planning, and which provides for a single administrative authority and an increased accountability for each major function. To this end, the Planning Department has proposed, and our office recommends, a staff and administrative reorganization.

The proposed reorganization has two major divisions -- permit processing and long-range planning. The Permit Processing Division will be separated into four sections: (1) Inspection and Enforcement; (2) Minor Permits; (3) Major Permits; and (4) Environmental and Technical Permits. The Advanced Planning Division will be comprised of three sections: (1) Resource Planning; (2) Community Development and (3) Transportation Planning. The organization charts on pages 7 and 8 highlight the organizational structure and division of functions and programs for both the proposed staff reorganization as well as the current organization of the Planning Department.

Discussion

Consolidating the resources responsible for application processing in one division in the Planning Department will provide for specialization in permit processing, while maintaining administrative consistency and overall accountability. The proposed Minor Permit Section will be responsible for projects involving ministerial review and the relatively routine discretionary applications. The Major Project Review Section will be responsible for those projects which typically require substantial review, detailed staff reports, and public hearing. Environmental and technical reviews will be performed by the Environmental and Technical Permit Section.

The Inspection Services Division will retain responsibility for projects after building permit issuance, with plan checking duties transferred to the Minor Permit Review Section.

The new Permit Processing Division will be administered by an assistant director, with the various line functions administered by section chiefs. It is also recommended that the clerical staff in this division be assigned to a pool under the direct responsibility of the Assistant Director so that clerical resources can be allocated to the different section staff on an as needed basis to better meet workload peaks. The responsibility for file maintenance and centralized recordkeeping should be assigned to this division, since the majority of file check out and review occurs within the permit processing area.

Staff specialization in the proposed organizational structure should reduce those problems which are associated with a constant change in work focus; provide an opportunity to develop and implement specialized training; and will

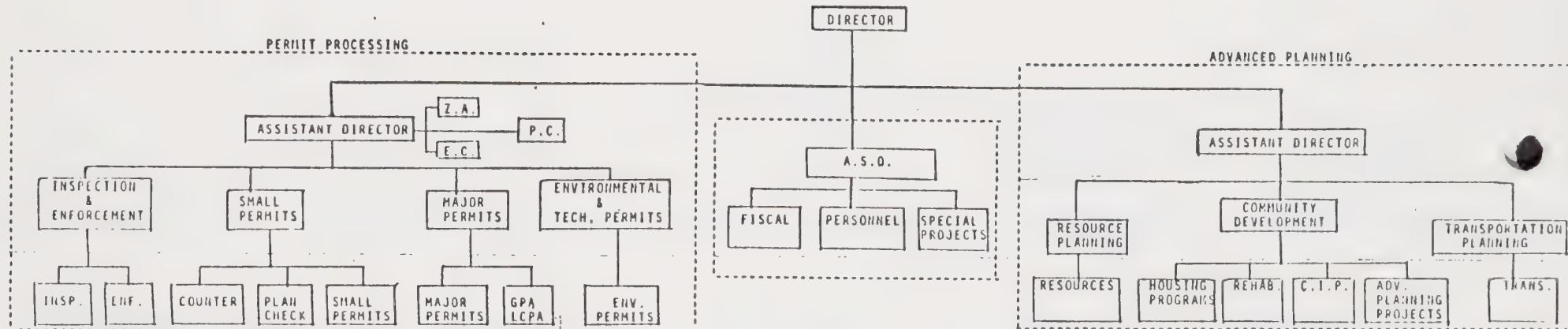
translate into more knowledgeable communications with the public. We believe that such a distinction will provide for more consistent policy interpretation and implementation since the number of individuals responsible for a given type of project will be reduced.

In addition to the Permit Processing Division, there will be a second major division which will have the responsibility for long term resource planning, housing and transportation programs, population forecasts, and other community development assignments. In our judgment, a consolidated, advanced planning division which brings together the long-range land use, population, capital facilities, and environmental resources and constraints planning functions will be beneficial to the County. This division will be administered by a second Assistant Director, with section managers responsible for the different program areas. It is also recommended that the clerical staff in this division be assigned to a central pool to provide support for the advanced planning staff.

The Administrative Services Officer will continue to supervise the fiscal, personnel, and graphics services for the entire division, as well as coordinate and direct data processing, word processing, microfilming, and new systems development in the department.

Overall management should improve since the reorganization will reduce the span of control for department administrative and supervisory personnel. Supervisors will become more accessible to staff for consultation and decision-making. Managers will be in a position to develop a more detailed understanding of the workloads of staff.

PROPOSED ORGANIZATION



- o Building Insp.
- o Building Enf.
- o Energy Insp.
- o Mobile Homes/AVA

- o Building Counter
- o Zoning Counter
- o Building Plan Check
- o Zoning Plan Check
- o Small Permit Processing

- o Planning Com.
- o Zoning Admin.
- o DRG
- o Ag. Pol. Adv. Com.
- o GPA/LCPA's
- o Major Urban Projects
- o Complex Rural Projects
- o Zoning Ord. Amendments
- o Parks Com. Liaison

- o Environmental Review
- o Environmental Permits and Inspection (Grading, Riparian, etc.)
- o Geologic Review
- o Mining Permits

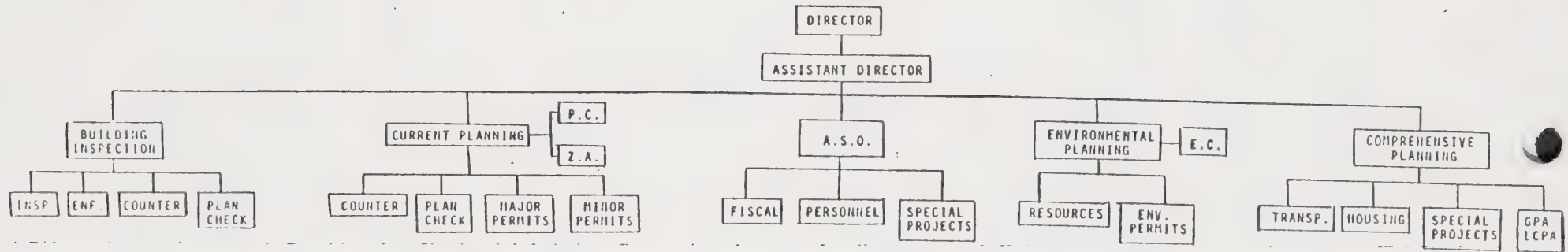
- o Fiscal Admin.
- o Personnel Admin.
- o Budget Admin.
- o Special Computer Projects
- o Microfilm Services
- o Purchasing
- o Physical Operations
- o Graphics

- o Water Quality and Quality Planning
- o Rain/Flood Monitoring
- o Forestry
- o Erosion/Fisheries Grants
- o Solid Waste Planning
- o Water Adv. Commission
- o Fish & Game Commission

- o Affordable Housing Prog.
- o Housing Rehab. Prog.
- o CIP
- o GP/LCP Major Revisions
- o Population Studies
- o Historic Resource Com.
- o Housing Adv. Com.
- o Special Research Proj. (eg. Felton Design Plan)

- o Transp. Com.
- o Traffic Improv. Areas
- o Carpool Program
- o Bio. Salv. Program
- o Tech. Assist. & Services

EXISTING ORGANIZATION



- o Building Inspection
- o Building Enforcement
- o Energy Inspection
- o Mobile Homes/AVA
- o Building Counter
- o Building Plan Check

- o Zoning Counter
- o Zoning Plan Check
- o DRG
- o Major Urban Projects
- o Complex Rural Projects
- o Small Permits

- o Fiscal Admin.
- o Personnel Admin.
- o Budget Admin.
- o Special Computer Projects
- o Microfilm Services
- o Purchasing
- o Physical Operations
- o Graphics

- o Environmental Review
- o Environmental Permits & Insp.
- o Geologic Review
- o Mining Permits
- o Water Quality and Quality Planning
- o Rain/Flood Monitoring
- o Forestry
- o Erosion/Fisheries Grants
- o Water Adv. Com.
- o Fish and Game Com.

- o Housing Program
- o All GP/LCP changes
- o Population Studies
- o Trans. Com.
- o Traffic Imp. Areas
- o Carpool Program
- o Bicycle Safety Program
- o Tech. Tran. Asst.
- o Population Studies
- o Historic Resources Com.
- o Housing Adv. Com.
- o Solid Waste Planning
- o APAC
- o Ordinance Amendments
- o Parks Com. Liaison
- o Special Projects

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Implementation Recommendations

If approved by your Board, it is our recommendation that transition teams be formulated to assist the administration in implementing this major reorganization. Each transition team will be responsible for identifying issues and details necessary for an orderly transition to the new organizational structure.

One of the first and most critical assignments will be to clearly define the types and levels of projects which will be processed by the minor application section, as distinguished from those which will be handled by the major project section. Appropriate forms, guidelines, and procedures will have to be developed to make the new sections function smoothly. It is our belief that staff who have extensive experience in application processing must be consulted and involved in establishing the criteria for application review. Other areas which will most likely require team assistance include large project coordination, training, and space modification planning.

Classification analysis and actions must occur to implement this revised organizational structure. Our office recommends, and the Planning Department has agreed, that the position changes should not produce a net increase in the number of authorized positions.

There are two positions central to the new organizational structure which are not presently authorized: (1) an Assistant Director position and, (2) a Supervisor for the Minor Project Section. It is our recommendation that your Board authorize these two positions to enable the Personnel Department to commence classification analysis. We further recommend that your Board authorize the Planning Department to make appointments to these two positions; provided, however, that a hiring freeze be concurrently implemented for two professional level position vacancies in the department for the duration of the fiscal year. Our budget recommendation for FY 85-86 will reflect final classification and position changes and provide your Board with appropriate recommendations.

Additional Recommendations on Application Processing

In addition to the proposed staff reorganization, we further recommend the following changes to reduce fragmentation in application processing.

2. For the more complex projects, a procedure should be established which expands the basic concept underlying the existing development review group process. Such a procedure should provide an opportunity for applicants to have a preapplication consultation with an appropriate staff committee representing the different review functions both within the Planning Department and the other critical land use agencies. The purpose of such a consultation would be to provide an applicant with an opportunity to understand the procedural steps and information requirements in the review process, and provide staff with an opportunity to identify code requirements.

The sole purpose of the consultation session would be to provide some general advice and information to applicants at the earliest opportunity. Planning staff should explore this concept with other land use departments and provide your Board with recommendations as to target applicants, frequency of meetings, scheduling, agency involvement, and applicant cost.

3. To the extent possible, staff should attempt to coordinate and schedule visits to project sites to minimize delays between visits by different staff and to develop a method for informing the applicant of the results of the various on-site reviews in a coordinated, comprehensive manner. Thus, if it appears that a site visit will be necessary for zoning and building code compliance, for environmental review (grading, erosion, geologic hazards, riparian considerations, etc.) or for other reasons, then an attempt should be made to schedule and complete these site reviews within a specified period of time (10-14 days) so that any potential problems can be identified at an early stage in the application review process and presented to the applicant at one time.
4. Staff should explore additional avenues for educating the public as to the current regulatory and review process. Presently, the two main methods for instructing most applicants are one-on-one review and discussion at the counter and secondly, through applicants' referencing the Citizen's Guide to Permit Processing. Planning staff should explore other alternatives as well, such as the use of video tape presentations to highlight application submission requirements and processing timelines; develop large charts for public reference outlining the review process for different types of applications; or schedule group orientation sessions wherein a staff member or committee would explain the overall requirements to similar applicants (e.g. single family builders outside the urban services line).
5. Since the Planning Department is designated as the central agency with the responsibility for application processing, it is further recommended that the proposed training committee (discussed in Section III of this report) identify cross training needs involving other County agencies, most notably Environmental Health and the Public Works Departments. Staff from those agencies should be consulted to identify areas in which clarification or educational programs are needed to enhance the ability of project planners to provide complete and accurate information and guidance to the public.
6. The various maps which are consulted by project planners should be more centrally located for convenient reference by project planners. Project staff should be consulted to determine whether additional sets of the general plan, local coastal plan, resource and constraints and other technical maps are needed to increase staff efficiency and effectiveness. Duplicate maps should become a high priority for the graphics division if such a need is identified.

7. Permit streamlining and simplification efforts should continue as a high priority in the new organization within the Planning Department to further improve the internal application procedures and processes in effect in this County. We believe that the new organizational structure will provide for more efficient processing of applications by consolidating staff responsible for application review in one division. The transition teams assisting in the organizational transition should also propose any other changes which would further expedite or simplify application processing.

II. MANAGEMENT AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS

PROBLEM:

The Planning Department lacks systematic procedures for tracking application processing; monitoring workload; obtaining feedback from project applicants and members of the development community; or assessing quality of service.

The department is responsible for a wide range of permit types and different reviews. These responsibilities are shared by many staff, and often involve processing over lengthy periods of time. Quickly identifying the status of any given application or its review history is not possible at the present time.

Workload is not systematically measured to determine individual assignment workloads, the rate of new application submittals, or the pending application volume. Absent such information, it is difficult to assess actual or potential processing backlogs or resource problems.

The department interacts with a wide range of individuals in the community, ranging from individuals wishing to pursue a minor project to professionals and large developers. Presently, the Planning Department does not solicit the input of applicants in any routine or systematic way. Applicants seeking an outlet will frequently contact the Board of Supervisors to express their frustrations or comments about their experiences with the department.

Recommendations:

To improve the ability of the Planning Department to track projects, assess workload problems, and obtain applicant input, it is recommended that:

1. The department should place a priority emphasis on implementing the computer base tracking system which is in the final stages of development. This system should greatly enhance the department's capability to identify the status of any particular project on demand. This information should be readily available to staff, applicants, members of the Board of Supervisors and their aides, and other interested agencies and individuals.
2. Statistical reports on workload should be developed and generated either manually or by the automated permit tracking system to provide management staff and your Board with current statistics on application processing within the department. These reports should be prepared for your Board on a semi-annual basis, unless a specific problem exists which requires your Board's earlier attention.

The table on pages 4A and 4B provides your Board with an overview of the 1984 annual volume of processing activity by type of project and processing level. The Planning Department performed over 5,800 application reviews and technical approvals during a twelve month period. Of course, the higher level projects place a greater demand on staff resources than the lower level applications and approvals. It should also be noted that these figures do not equate to permits issued, since one building or development permit may involve multiple reviews and approvals.

3. The Planning Department should develop a comprehensive strategy for soliciting applicant input. Project applicants are in a good position to provide meaningful input since they experience the entire application review process with multiple agencies. An applicant survey form could be developed to solicit applicants' comments on the services of the Planning Department, as well as ideas for improvements to current processes or procedures. These surveys could become the basis for identifying and resolving ongoing problems.

Another approach would be to develop written quality standards for application processing and collect ongoing data to assess departmental performance against those standards. One individual could be responsible for quality assessment, which might be accomplished through telephone or in-person surveys, random file review, observation, or a combination of such techniques. The results of such a process on an ongoing basis could help to identify training needs, policies or procedures in need of clarification, and problem areas in the system.

III. STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

PROBLEM:

Differences exist among Planning Department staff in the interpretation of land use laws, regulations and policies. As a result, applicants sometimes receive inconsistent information from different individuals in the department. Decision-making processes lack definition.

As discussed in detail in Section I, the complexity of the legal environment and regulatory policy structures, coupled with the sheer number of individuals and agencies who are involved in most projects, contribute to the potential for inconsistency and fragmentation. Without a rigorous and sustained training program it is difficult, if not impossible, for any given Planning staff member to become expert in all of the different areas affecting a development application, such as the General Plan, the Zoning Ordinance, Coastal Act requirements, environmental guidelines, and the requirements of other County departments and outside agencies.

Recommendations:

To begin to address this extremely complex problem, we are recommending the following:

1. The Planning Department should designate individual in each division who will be responsible for development and coordination of in-service training programs.
2. To assist these individuals, a training committee should be formulated within the Planning Department to identify staff training needs and to recommend specific training subjects. This committee should have representation from the various divisions within the department, including clerical, professional, and management staff. This committee should be charged with the following tasks:
 - A. Developing a survey to distribute to all staff to identify staff training needs;
 - B. Analyzing the survey results;
 - C. Developing a standard orientation program for new employees;
 - D. Developing training programs tailored to the specific divisional needs of the department;
 - E. Identifying any training goals which will require outside technical assistance or attendance at conferences or seminars sponsored outside of this County.

If it appears that any contracts are needed for specific subject matter training, it is further recommended that the technical assistance of the Personnel Department be utilized for training contract negotiations. A specific schedule should be established for in-service training utilizing Wednesday afternoons, which are presently closed to the public.

3. In conjunction with staff reorganization and any resulting reassignments, a concerted effort needs to be made to define divisional and individual staff responsibilities to establish clear lines of policy and decision-making authority; position expectations; and project responsibility.

Responsibility for certain tasks, such as processing of complex applications, is fragmented among several divisions and individuals. It is our perception that a major source of applicant frustration occurs when applicants seek a definitive answer to questions or issues which involve more than one division or individual. Similarly, Planning staff members do not clearly understand what level of discretion, independence or authority has been delegated to them by management, which can result in processing delays.

Accordingly, we believe that the Planning Department management staff should establish written guidelines defining divisional responsibilities, policy and decision-making procedures, and position authority. Standardized position descriptions should be developed for positions with similar responsibilities within the department. Position descriptions are to be differentiated from the official class specifications maintained by the Personnel Department which by their nature are general and often describe several positions with different assignments. Position descriptions should delineate the specific duties, performance expectations, level of decision-making and independence which is allowed for each position. When finalized, these position descriptions will become the basis for ongoing performance assessment and evaluation. In essence, they constitute a form of "contract" between the employee and his or her supervisor.

4. Administrative interpretations of policies, laws and regulations should be condensed to writing and maintained in a policies and procedures manual for staff reference to assure consistent staff responses. One individual should be designated responsible for updating, maintaining, and indexing such a manual and a copy of this manual should be available to each and every staff person who has a need for it.

PROBLEM:

Frequent complaints are received indicating that staff do not always return phone calls; may not provide follow-up information which was requested; and are late for or sometimes miss scheduled appointments.

Project planners have many demands on their time. They must balance assignments, shift priorities, work on multiple projects, and assist the public. Without direction and careful time management, problems such as those discussed above can arise.

Recommendations:

Recognizing that there are job pressures and demands, there is still no acceptable excuse or rational explanation for the existence of these problems. To correct and control these problems, we recommend that:

1. Individual staff should establish weekly schedules in advance in consultation with their supervisors. These schedules should provide for telephone response time, field inspection time, report writing and so forth. Clerical staff can assist project planners by providing members of the public with a definitive time when a telephone call will be returned, and assist in the scheduling of appointments.
2. The Planning Department management should develop and distribute a standardized three-part carbonless form to be used by members of the Board of Supervisors and other agency personnel when requesting analysis or information from the department.

The Board member, department or agency initiating the request would retain the original copy of the form for his or her files, and send the other two parts to the appropriate division head in the Planning Department, rather than directly to the staff planner. The division head would retain one part and forward the request to the specific individual responsible for responding to the inquiry. The appropriate division administrator will thus be aware of all requests from Board members and other County officials and will be in a position to ensure a response. This procedure will also allow department management staff to monitor the volume of external requests for information from staff and analyze the patterns of such requests so that corrective action can be taken.

3. The Planning Department should develop other methods as appropriate to monitor and control these problems.

PROBLEM:

Written materials for the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors are frequently late or incomplete. Agenda materials are not consistently organized or labeled.

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Recommendations:

To address this problem, we recommend that the Planning Department do the following:

1. Develop and implement a better system for monitoring the status of reports on project applications as well as other projects for which they are responsible. The present system of monitoring projects according to the final deadline date should be extended to include monitoring at intermediate steps.

In this regard, it may be possible for the Planning Department to consult with the Data Processing Department on computerized options for monitoring the progress and timeliness of staff actions on the numerous applications and projects pending at any given time. If not, a workable manual system should be designed. Administrative and supervisory staff should assume a more active role in ensuring that projects are reviewed and completed on a timely basis.

2. Guidelines should be developed and disseminated to both the professional and clerical staff establishing uniform formats for the preparation of staff reports. Clear guidelines should be established for labeling of report exhibits and attachments, as well as specifying a standard order for materials within staff reports.

A table of contents or list of exhibits should be included in every staff report with references to the material included in or attached to the report. In addition to providing the page number referencing the staff report, there should also be an additional blank column on the table of contents page to enable individual Board members to enter the agenda packet page number if desired for reference purposes.

Standard checklist forms should be developed for use by project planners detailing information and procedural requirements to ensure complete and consistent preparation of materials for the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors. Department supervisory staff should be responsible for reviewing submitted materials carefully to identify any discrepancies or problems at the earliest possible time to alleviate the late submission of materials to the Board of Supervisors and the Planning Commission.

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IV. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC ACCESS

PROBLEM:

The Planning Department appears to be in physical disarray. Staff are working in crowded conditions, and the space layout and distribution does not present a professional image to the public nor is it conducive to staff efficiency and morale. The public counter area is inadequate in terms of size, design and public comfort.

Over the past several years, the Planning Department has grown in size and scope of responsibility. Allocated space has not kept pace with the growth in staff. As a result, staff has been gradually added to already limited office areas resulting in haphazard layout and poor working conditions. Equipment has likewise been added on an incremental basis and it is not clear whether all current staff have the necessary resources to perform their work efficiently.

The County Administrative Office has been assigned the responsibility for analyzing the space needs of the fourth floor departments and providing your Board with recommendations on space allocation and costs required to implement any changes. Over the past six weeks, this office has met with the fourth floor departments and has analyzed the overall space requirements of fourth floor departments, with a specific emphasis on the Planning Department and the Health Services Agency's Environmental Health Division.

Recommendations:

1. After a thorough and careful analysis, we have concluded that the Planning Department needs additional space to provide the following:
 - o Individual work areas to the maximum extent possible for professional staff;
 - o Additional meeting room and conference areas;
 - o Larger working areas for the Inspection Services and code enforcement staff;
 - o Better plan check and plan review areas;
 - o A larger, more carefully controlled records and file room located closer to the counter;
 - o Centralized location for administrative staff;
 - o An expanded counter and main reception function in the counter area (see Planning and Building counter discussion);
 - o Convenient locations for computer terminals, printers and photocopy machines;
 - o Working areas for counter staff which are in close proximity to, yet removed from the main public area.

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In our judgment, neither the Environmental Health Division nor the Public Works Department can afford either individually or collectively to lose the necessary amount of space and still retain an efficient and functional space arrangement in their departments. In fact, the Environmental Health Division needs additional space to accommodate a position recently authorized by your Board as well as provide additional space for existing staff, files and equipment.

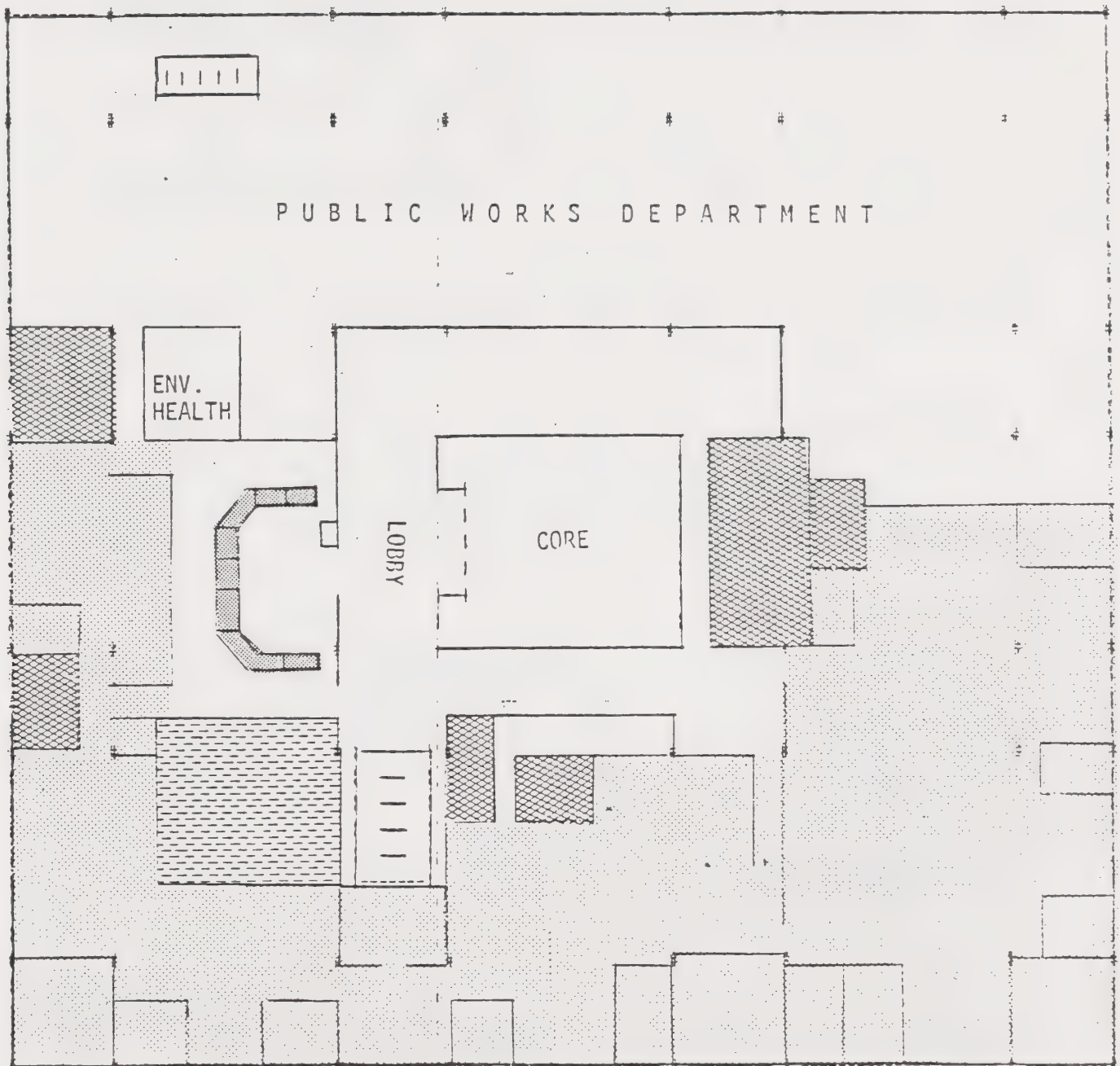
Given the physical limitation in available floor space, it appears that the necessary space modifications which will result in significant, office-wide improvements for both the Planning Department and the Environmental Health Division cannot be made if all of the present fourth floor functions remain there in the future. Therefore it is recommended that the Environmental Health Division be relocated to the third floor to occupy space which will become vacant when the Human Resources Agency transfers most of its staff from the third floor of the Governmental Center to the Emeline Street complex. Relocating the Environmental Health Division will provide the necessary floor space for the Planning Department expansion without negatively affecting the Health Services Agency's Environmental Health Division or the Public Works Department.

An outstation work area for the land use component of Environmental Health will be incorporated into the overall space layout for the fourth floor to provide continuity in application processing. Additionally, there is sufficient space available on the third floor to increase the total number of square feet presently authorized for the Environmental Health Division. Our office is presently working with the Environmental Health Division to identify the precise amount of space needed on the third floor, as well as the costs associated with this move.





The Human Resources Agency Director has indicated that their relocation should be completed by mid-April. The relocation of Environmental Health to this vacant office space must occur before the physical modifications can begin in the Planning Department.

The proposed design for the Planning Department office area features a combination of permanent, private office and work areas and an increased usage of partitions to create individual and group work areas. The proposed design also features a change in the current depth of most exterior office work areas, decreasing the depth of the offices from 15 feet to 10 feet to provide more working space in the interior of the department. The staggering of private offices and open work areas along the exterior is also designed to permit natural light to flow into internal work areas. On the following page you will find a summary of the space proposal for the Planning Department. The Planning Department is in agreement with this proposal.

SUMMARY OF FOURTH FLOOR SPACE PROPOSAL



LEGEND

-  OFFICE AND STAFF WORK AREAS
-  CONFERENCE AND MEETING ROOMS
-  RECORDS ROOM
-  COUNTER AREA

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physical image and working environment of the public areas of the department, as well as improving its service capability. Counter redesign should address the following needs:

- o A comfortable and aesthetically pleasing lobby area which utilizes existing hallway space;
- o A main information and reception location in the counter area;
- o Additional physical counter space to meet peak service demands;
- o Map display surfaces around the counter for planner reference and presentation to the public;
- o Table surfaces for applicants to make minor modifications to plans;
- o A degree of privacy at the counter for both applicants and staff;
- o Conference and meeting room space near the counter; and
- o A centrally located counter for access by all land use departments.

At this time our office is recommending a revised and expanded counter area (see space plan summary on page 20) as well as a new intake concept for applicants. We are recommending that an interior design firm be retained to assist in planning this area to ensure that the layout is both functional and attractive.

This proposal for the counter and public service area incorporates most of the features which were presented in the previous space proposal considered by your Board. We are recommending that the current hallway be utilized as a lobby area and that furniture be purchased for this area. We also recommend the establishment of a central reception/information desk to assist and screen individuals prior to proceeding into the counter area. Our proposal provides additional counter surface space, and anticipates that the existing oak counters will be utilized to the maximum extent possible. Reference maps can be mounted on the wall surfaces directly behind the counter for review by staff and the public. A private meeting room and conference area is within close proximity of the counter for meetings between applicants and project planners.

Applicant Appointments

In addition to these features which are incorporated into our space proposal, we are also recommending that the Planning Department, in conjunction with other land use departments, develop an intake system which encourages, and in selected cases requires, prior appointments for the public. The appointment system should enable staff to better prepare for meetings with the public, and should also reduce the amount of applicant waiting time associated with a first-come, first-serve system.

It is our belief that the land use regulatory process in Santa Cruz County is sufficiently complex to warrant such a system. The appointment system should be designed to provide schedule flexibility to enable servicing individuals without an appointment, such as agency referrals, particularly during the transition period from a total walk-in to a combination walk-in and appointment system.

The primary goal of an integrated land use counter incorporating all County land use departments is to increase the capability of the County to provide applicants with complete and convenient information and application processing. We are recommending that the revised counter area be accessible to staff from not only the Planning Department, but the Environmental Health, Public Works and Fire Marshal's Office as well. An interior hallway between the Public Works and Environmental Health outstation work area and the Planning Department will allow staff to come directly to the main counter area as needed to assist applicants. It is not recommended that a full-time person from each of these divisions be assigned to the counter per se, but that staff be available on an on-call or appointment basis to meet with applicants.

PROBLEM:

File control in the Planning Department is lacking. Department files are in several, nonsecure areas accessible by all staff as well as the public. Pending project applications are stored at individual planner's work locations in a haphazard manner.

The department has a file room for the storage of closed planning files. The Inspection Services Division maintains its own files, which includes both active and inactive projects. Applications which are currently being processed are stored in various areas throughout the department and at the desks of individuals who are assigned project review responsibilities. The graphics department has a storage area for large maps and other oversized documents. There are also a number of administrative and reference files located throughout the department.

Recommendations;

To improve file management and control, we recommend the following:

1. Files should be transferred and consolidated into a secure records room. The data technician position authorized in the Planning Department's budget should be physically located within the file room and should be responsible for file security and control. Individuals should be required to "check out" files from the records center.
2. Written criteria should be developed for the purging and retention of application files.
3. Non-active historical files should be microfilmed to reduce the need for on-site retention space.

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4. High density filing equipment should be procured to maximize the use of available space.
5. Map storage equipment should be purchased for planner staff to increase efficiency and present a better image to the public.

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U.C. BERKELEY LIBRARIES



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